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LD 953

I am writing in strong support of LD 953, which brings much-needed clarity and precision to Maine's firearm laws by aligning the definition of "machine gun" with the well-established federal standard under the National Firearms Act (NFA).

For decades, the NFA has defined a machine gun as a weapon capable of firing more than one round automatically with a single function of the trigger. LD 953 adopts this definition, ensuring that only true machine guns and illegal conversion devices are classified as such. This change eliminates the ambiguity of the current law, which includes vague terms like "rapid succession," opening the door for inconsistent enforcement and confusion.

By clearly defining a machine gun based on the NFA, LD 953 guarantees that only fully automatic firearms or devices specifically designed to convert firearms into automatic weapons fall under this classification. This approach not only mirrors federal law but also ensures that law-abiding citizens are not unjustly targeted for owning lawful semi-automatic firearms or parts that comply with federal standards.

Unlike other proposals, such as LD 677, which rely on undefined and subjective terms like "materially increases the rate of fire," LD 953 upholds a standard that is both technically accurate and legally sound. These vague definitions risk punishing responsible gun owners for possessing common, legal components, while LD 953 protects their rights by adhering to clear, established federal law.

LD 953 offers a sensible, straightforward solution that removes ambiguity, strengthens enforcement, and ensures that Maine's firearm laws are both fair and effective. I urge the committee to support and pass this bill, as it protects the rights of responsible firearm owners and maintains legal consistency.